

Robert Lee is Mike Lewis Extra Mile Award winner for second quarter

Updating the Agency's claims processing system on February 23, 2008, represented the culmination of more than two years' work and millions of individual employee hours designed to ensure that providers' claims were processed accurately. Without Robert Lee's extensive knowledge about Medicaid eligibility and technical skill, Alabama Medicaid's move to the new system might not have been as fluid. Lee's tenacious testing of the recipient component not only paved the way for a smooth transition, but earned him the Mike Lewis Extra Mile Award for second quarter of 2008.

Nominated by a supervisor or co-workers, the recipient is chosen by a selection committee of fellow employees. The award is named in memory of former Medicaid Commissioner Mike Lewis.

Testing the new system involved, among other things, meticulously comparing hundreds of printed screen shots with what was actually on the computer screen to ensure no details were missed. Each piece of the system had to be tested and retested before it went live with countless hours spent creating situations that mirrored how the eligibility workers would use the system. The bulk of the most recent push to refine the system took place between September 2007 and March 2008, while Lee was working on the Cost of Living Adjustments.



The process was like a chess game between Lee, a Medicaid eligibility manager in the Certification Support Division, and Charlie Ferguson, a program analyst in Information Services Division. Each would respectfully attempt to find flaws in the new system the other might have missed. After each correction was made Lee would start the testing over from scratch. By "over-testing" glitches could be caught that might otherwise have fallen through the cracks. "I have a reputation of being able to break a steel ball, but the programmers did a great job," Lee graciously admits.

"Robert has gone above and beyond what was asked of him," said Rosie Wilkerson, program analyst in Medicaid's Information Systems Division. "He painstakingly verified test results, which sometimes took days. You knew it had to be correct before Robert would sign off on the results."

A theme of teamwork underlies Robert's attention to detail. "The focus of all our effort is to ensure the district office field workers have the tools necessary to make their jobs easier," Lee said.

Lee has worked 28 years for the Alabama Medicaid Agency. Prior to Medicaid, Robert was a social worker with the Department of Human Resources for seven years.